

4/29 Biology Workgroup Conf Call

On Call:

Vic Crecco  
Paul Caruso  
Eric Frohmberg

Discussed materials submitted and posted on the web

Bluefish Bio:

Talk about how Bluefish less well known, but simpler. Since people are going to read both the bluefish bio and the striped bass bio at the same time it would be worth adding a statement the end that there is not as much tagging data available for bluefish as there is for striped bass. **Eric will do this and add to document.**

Overall, based on this document, it appears for our perspective, that there is one population migrating up and down the coast. Hence, it may make sense to have a consistent coastal advisory. The one exception MIGHT be the Atlantic coastal Florida bluefishery which may not migrate with the other atlantic coast fish. Depending on the PCB levels it may or may not make sense to include them in a coastal advisory.

Striped Bass Bio:

While there is annual tagging data since 1987, Vic relied on the more recent information.

A large portion of the Atlantic coastal migratory stock appears to over winter offshore of NC and VA. However, there are components of the Atlantic Striped Bass stock that overwinter in other places along the coast from Southern New England to the Offshore waters of NC and VA. It may very well be the same for bluefish.

There was a conversation about confidence in the dates of movement. General feeling was that they are reasonably correct, but not specific enough to be able to say that if we catch fish in one month at a particular location we are catching fish from one breeding stock. In part that is due to the massive size of the Chessie stock. There has been a good deal of work related to striped bass stock identification and there is no simple clear cut method to determine where a specific striped bass originated. Moreover, even if there was a simple method, the time line for completing such a test would not work out. I suspect that we could debate the contribution of the various estuaries for quite some time, but it safe to say that the Chesapeake Bay is the dominant producer, followed by the Hudson, then the Delaware and then the North Carolina Rivers. There is nothing to say that this is always the case, should the North Carolina fishery management practices change, there could be a marked increase in the contribution of those stocks to the Atlantic coastal stock.

The upshot is that it doesn't seem worthwhile to try to ID fish based on time and location of sampling.

That said, sampling should be spread out over time.

Magnitude of the fisheries.

Some discussion of what to include in the description of the MRFSS data. Standard procedure is to include A and B1. B1 includes discards. General feeling is that close to 100% of that category ends up being consumed.

**Next steps:**

Eric will summarize regulations along the coast and post on the website.

Eric will talk to Byron Young about NY's feelings about spatial and temporal sampling.

They may have something already written up that would be useful for this report.

Eric will talk to the data folks, but it seems like a logical next step will be to get the data and bio folks talking.